

12 METRE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP 2019



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Olympic Medalists Grael and Bank to Battle Head-to-Head at 12 Metre Worlds

NEWPORT, RI (January 23, 2019) – Brazil’s Torben Grael and Denmark’s Jesper Bank, who have eight Olympic sailing medals between them, will face off in the [2019 12 Metre World Championship](#), joining sailing royalty from around the globe for the largest-ever gathering of 12 Metres in the U.S. Scheduled for July 8-13 in Newport, R.I. the 12 Metre Worlds is hosted by [Ida Lewis Yacht Club](#), the [International Twelve Metre Association](#) (ITMA) America’s Fleet and the [12 Metre Yacht Club](#) and takes place on the same waters where the America’s Cup was held in 12 Metres from 1958 to 1983, adding further historical significance to this fleet racing competition planned for two dozen teams representing seven countries in four divisions.



(Left) Italy’s Patrizio Bertelli, CEO of the Prada fashion group and primary backer of the Challenger of Record (Luna Rossa) for the 36th America’s Cup, will join five-time Olympic Medalist Torben Grael aboard *Kookaburra II* (KA-12) at the 2019 12 Metre World Championship. (Photo credit Carlo Borlenghi) (Right) Sailing aboard *Legacy* (KZ-5) will be three-time Olympic medalist Jesper Bank.

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(Photo courtesy Jesper Bank)

Grael, winner of five Olympic medals (two golds and two bronzes in Star class and one silver in Soling class) will skipper Italian Patrizio Bertelli's [KA-12 Kookaburra II](#) in the seven-boat Grand Prix Division while Bertelli's second boat, [US-12 Nyala](#), will defend its World Title from Barcelona 2014 in the four-boat Vintage Division.

"I am looking forward to some action in these beautiful and historical boats and to sailing them in a special place like Newport," said Grael, whose past 12 Metre experience includes winning the 1999 12 Metre Worlds in Saint Tropez with [KZ-7 Kiwi Magic](#) (also competing in the Grand Prix Division here) and sailing *Nyala* in the America's Cup Jubilee in Cowes in 2001.

And while Grael adds relevant 12 Metre experience to his accomplishment of being one of the most *successful sailors* in Olympic history, he nevertheless has enormous respect for Bank's sailing accomplishments. "I know Jesper well; we have sailed Solings against each other on many occasions. He is a great sailor." Bank has won three Olympic Medals (two golds and one bronze in Soling class). At the Worlds, he will serve as tactician aboard [KZ-5 Legacy](#) (formerly *Laura*) while his close friend Thomas Andersen (Kerpeminde, Denmark) takes the helm. "It was Thomas's idea to come," said Bank, adding that Andersen crewed for him during the '84 Olympics and went on to helm many campaigns. "We grew up sailing Optimist Dinghies against each other in Fredericia, so it is a long, tested friendship. His father owned a 12 Metre, so that was part of his childhood, and Newport for us is such a legendary place for 12 Metres...."

Bank has campaigned for the America's Cup twice, in 2003 with Victory Challenge and in 2007 with United Internet Team Germany. When asked which experience – America's Cup competition or Olympic sailing – will better serve his participation in the 12 Metre Worlds, he explained: "The way I see it is the fleet racing in Olympic competition is more tactical and valuable coming into the 12 Metre Worlds, whereas America's Cup match racing experience is not as relevant."

Legacy has been chartered for the two weeks covering the [12 Metre Pre-Worlds Regatta](#) (July 6-7) and the Worlds. "When we get here, it will be our introduction to sailing a Grand Prix 12 Metre. None of us has ever sailed one; it will be a steep learning curve."

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Clockwise from left: 12 Metre sailor preparing sails (Photo credit Richard Schultz); KZ-5 and KZ-7 at the 2012 12 Metre North American Championship; 2014 Worlds fleet in Barcelona (Photo credit SallyAnne Santos/Windlass Creative)

It is expected that Patrizio Bertelli, CEO of the Prada fashion group and primary backer of the Challenger of Record (Luna Rossa) for the 36th America's Cup, will join Grael's team aboard *Kookaburra II*. The rest of Grael's team will consist of sailors from past Luna Rossa America's Cup campaigns (2000 through 2015), while Mauro Pelaschier, skipper of the Azzurra America's Cup campaign in '82, will skipper *Nyala* with some original Azzurra sailors and ex-Luna Rossa sailors aboard. *Kookaburra II* and *Nyala* will arrive in Newport near the end of June to compete in the Pre-Worlds and will sail in the "12 Metre Jubilee" at the New York Yacht Club's [175th Anniversary Regatta](#) (July 15-20) after the Worlds.

Competing 12 Metres (to date)

The 12 Metres are divided into divisions based on when they were built: Grand Prix (for 12 Metres built in 1987, winged keel), Modern (1967-1983), Traditional (1958-1966) and Vintage (1907-1958). Grand Prix, Modern and Traditional divisions mostly represent 12 Metres built for America's Cup competition, while the Vintage division represents those built prior to the Cup's 12 Metre era and when 12 Metres held a place in Olympic history.

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Grand Prix Division

[US-42 America II](#), New York Harbor Sailing Foundation, New York, N.Y.

[US-46 America II](#), New York Harbor Sailing Foundation, New York, N.Y.

[KZ-7 Kiwi Magic](#), Johan Blach Petersen, Aarhus, Denmark

[KA-12 Kookaburra II](#), Patrizio Bertelli, Porto Santo Stefano, Italy

[KA-15 Kookaburra III](#), Maurizio Vecchiola, Morrovalle Macerata, Italy

[KZ-5 Legacy \(nee Laura\)](#), Jesper Bank, Denmark

[KZ-3 New Zealand](#), Gunther Buerman, Highland Beach, Fla./Newport, R.I.

Modern Division

[KA-5 Australia](#), Sydney, NSW, Australia

[KA-10 Challenge XII](#), Jack LeFort, Jamestown, R.I.

[US-26 Courageous](#), Ralph Isham/Steve Glascock/Alexander Auersperg/Ward Marsh/Arthur Santry, Newport, R.I.

[US-33 Defender](#), US Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, N.Y.

[US-30 Freedom](#), Charles Robertson, Guilford, Conn.

[US-22 Intrepid](#), Jack Curtin, Toronto, Ontario/New York, N.Y.

[K-18 Lionheart](#), Harry Graves, Grand Isle, Vermont

[K-22 Victory '83](#), Dennis Williams, Hobe Sound, Fla./Newport, R.I.

Other potential competitors:

[US-27 Enterprise](#) – likely

[US-24 Valiant](#) – possible

Traditional Division

[US-21 American Eagle](#), Bob Morton/Cindy DeLotto, Newport, R.I./Edgartown, Mass.

[US-16 Columbia](#), Kevin Hegarty, Boston, Mass.

[US-18 Easterner](#), Scott Bernard, Annapolis, Md.

[US-19 Nefertiti](#), Sears Wullschleger, Sarasota, Fla.

[US-17 Weatherly](#), Jay Schachne, E. Greenwich, R.I.

Vintage Division

[K-17 Blue Marlin](#), Henrik Andersin, Kotka, Finland

[US-12 Nyala](#), Patrizio Bertelli, Porto Santo Stefano, Italy

[US-6 Onawa](#), Earl McMillen, Newport, R.I.

[N-11 Vema III](#), Vema Syndicate, Oslo, Norway

During the Worlds and the Pre-Worlds, most of the fleet will be berthed at Fort Adams where visitors will be able to view the yachts before and after racing. A large on-water spectator fleet is expected, and land-based spectators can catch the fleet sailing to and from the race course at vantage points along the shores closest to Narragansett Bay's East Passage, including Fort Adams, Beavertail Light and Castle Hill.

The 12 Metre World Championship is sponsored by [Helly Hansen Newport](#),

while Official Logistics Provider is [Sevenstar Yacht Transport](#).

For more information visit <https://12mrworlds.com/> or contact Peter Gerard at pgerard53@gmail.com.

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ABOUT THE 2019 12 METRE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

The International 12 Metre Class' 2019 World Championship will be held in Newport, Rhode Island (USA) from July 8-13 and hosted by the Ida Lewis Yacht Club and the 12 Metre Yacht Club. It will be the largest-ever gathering of 12 Metre yachts in the United States with at least two dozen boats from seven countries expected. International teams comprised of elite sailors, including America's Cup veterans and Olympic medalists, will represent such countries as Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway and the United States. The 2019 12 Metre World Championship fleet will span the years 1928 -1987, include seven America's Cup defenders and challengers, and be sailed on Rhode Island Sound, the site of nine America's Cup competitions from 1958-1983. www.12mrworlds.com

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL 12 METRE CLASS

The 112 year-old International 12 Metre Class encompasses a living history of racing yacht design by the world's foremost naval architects including Olin Stephens, Clinton Crane, William Fife III, Philip Rhodes, Johan Anker, Ben Lexcen and more who pushed their designs to the very limits of innovation. The resulting boats represented the pinnacle of yacht development from 1907-1987 for the highest levels of international sailing competition-- the Olympic Games (1908-1920) and the America's Cup (1958-1987). www.12mrclass.com

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